

Hello Friends and Family,

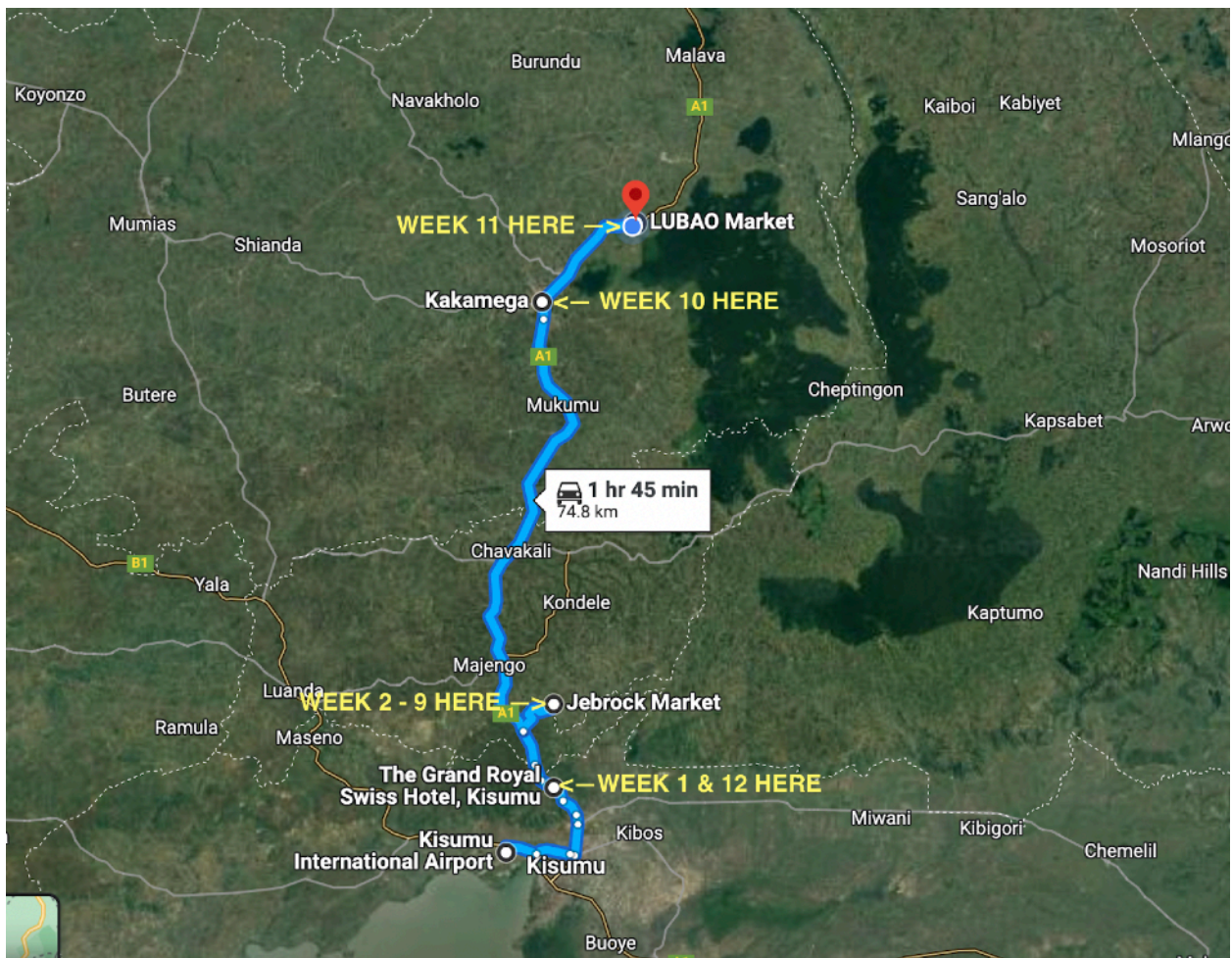
After two years of waiting and three months of intensive training I have finally sworn in as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Training was an intense six days a week regiment where we struggled and crammed as much Kiswahili as possible now I have achieved an intermediate mid level and can navigate through most interactions. I'm on the way to fluency but it will take time and many more conversations.

These last three months have been a whirlwind of hotels new houses new friends new food new ways of living and countless matato rides.

This has been my journey so far:

- Drive to Philly for 1.5 days of training (Is this where I get the Malaria meds?)
- Depart Philly at 4:30 am for a bus to JFK (Yikes. A fellow volunteer lectured me about the various ethnicities in Lord of The Rings Double Yikes. Who are these people?)
- Take a 14 hour flight to Nairobi (Watched Shawshank Redemption BORING!)
- 4 hour layover in Nairobi (Still no malaria meds - must run away from mosquitos)
- 40 minute flight to Kisumu (This county has a ton of Malaria where are my meds?!)
- 30 minute bus ride to the Grand Royal Swiss Hotel (Sun is sitting still no meds!)
- Intro lecture to health issues and now I'm finally given the Malaria med Doxycycline. Many people have told me that malaria prophylaxis medications will cause hallucinatory (trippy) dreams let's go! Alas, that's only the weekly medication - Chloroquine - not the daily one I'm taking - Doxycycline. (And no way will I remember to take a pill every week!)
- Finally after about 32 hours of travel and maybe 3 hours of sleep I can crash
- Definitely had crazy dreams but like a kind writer I won't bore you with them.

Anyway here's a map to visualize the rest of my journey.



After our stay at the boujee Grand Royal Swiss hotel we moved to Village Based Training where I spent eight weeks integrating into the Jebrock Community. I stayed in a house next to MaMa Rebecca's with 4 other volunteers see attached.

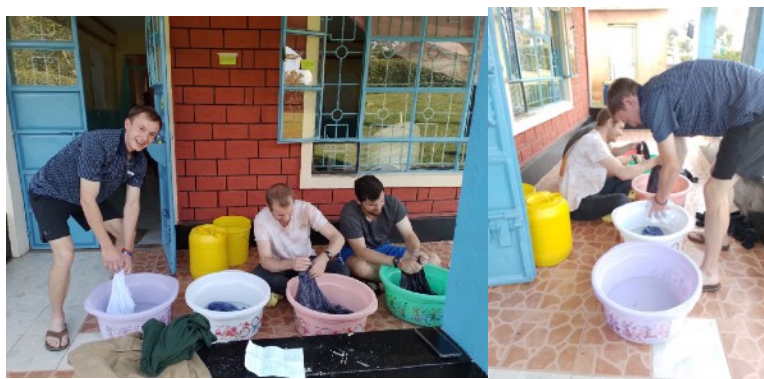


Back Row: Mama Rebecca, KID, Mark, Gideon (Sign Language Interpreter), Evans (Swahili Teacher), (Babu Our Swahili Teacher)
Middle Row: Mercy (Our Cook), Michelle, Denise, Alexis
Front Row: Me TREVOR COX Smizing, Arena (PC Driver), Michael

We learned how to cook Kenyan Style:



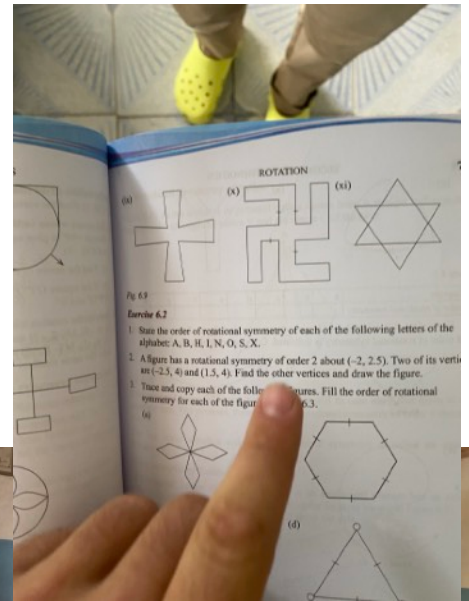
How to wash clothes:



How to teach (at our practice school Dr. Maurice Dan'gana):



A math textbook we found:



How to Dance:



And how to wash our bodies with a bucket and poop in a hole:

CENSORED

After 8 weeks of village based training:

- I moved to the Sheywe hotel in Kakamega for 3 days (Another Boujee hotel)
- Then a hotel room for preachers in Lubao for 4 days (AMEN!)
- Finally I moved into my new house in Lubao: Nyumba ya Cox where I will be living for the next two years. Here's a photo:



I'll give you a tour of it my next newsletter! :D

Also, I was able to attend some cultural events! I attended an annual river baptism event, a wedding, and I heard the drums and screams of the Luhya Tribe's circumcision ceremony (photos are not permitted).



After these twelve weeks of training I finally swore in as a Peace Corps Volunteer. I am joined by 22 other volunteers in my cohort. They come from all across the US and from all walks of life. (Nobody is from California or New York except me!!!). We have sworn in as Education and Health Volunteers. And we will carry out capacity building projects in STEM Education, Education for the Deaf, and Community Public Health Education.



With Juma



With Muhammed



With Housemates



With Arena



With PC Kenya
Country Director
Kristi
Also a Lair
Connection!
Small World



THANKS FOR READING! SEE YOU IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!

LOTS OF LOVE,
TREVOR COX!

P.S. If you want to visit please do I've got two mattresses and a couch for friends and family to crash on you just have to tell me ahead of time because I can't miss any Kenyan School days, and we have a different school calendar than the American school calendar.

P.P.S.

I've been reading a lot here's a list of what I've read so far:

God's Bankers by Gerald Posner (A history of the Vatican Bank)

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles (Very fun!)

The Worldly Philosophers by Robert L Heilbroner (Surprisingly entertaining if you are interested in the history of economic thought)

The first 9 books of the Bible (more entertaining than I thought!)

Family of Secrets by Russ Baker (History of the bush Dynasty)

Nato's Secret Armies by Daniele Ganser (Interesting history of the cold war)

Blackshirts and Reds by Michael Parenti (The rise of fascism and communism in Europe after World War 1)

And the first 25 volumes of Bleach. (Manga)